approaches, and the reception-rooms were filled with men and officers, friends of the arch-conspirator. Disquieting news soon began to arrive from the assemblies. Upstairs the Ancients, amid intense excitement, had voted a series of routine motions and adjourned for an interval, a course tending to postpone consideration of the proposition to intrust Bonaparte with the conduct of affairs. They wished to ascertain through a message from the Five Hundred, as the law required, if the executive were duly constituted, and all the directors present; for in that case only would their action be legal. The delay was to them unaccountable and seemed interminable as they strolled about in pairs and groups, uneasy and vacillating. At last the rumor spread that the general was coming to their hall and they hurried to their seats. When they were at last reassembled anarchy broke loose; for the secretary announced, falsely, of course, that four directors had resigned, and that the fifth was in restraint.

At that moment Bonaparte, with his staff, appeared at the door and a sudden silence fell upon the place. The scene appalled him. The bravery of the general is different from the personal courage of the soldier in the face of physical danger, and both are unlike the pluck of him who defies the law. The latter Bonaparte never had. For a moment he was pale; but, gathering resolution by a mighty effort, he spoke in disjointed but rudely eloquent phrase. They were on a volcano, he saidL He was no Caesar or Cromwell, but a plain soldier living quietly in Paris, who had been called unawares to save his country. If he had been a usurper, he would have called not on the legislature, but on the soldiers of Italy. It was the duty of those present to save liberty and equality — "and the constitution/' cried a voice. "The constitution!" was his answer, "You violated